

Message Text

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12

ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-13 /084 W

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FM AMCONSUL ASMARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3938

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON

COMNAVTELCOM WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN

COMIDEASTFOR

NAVCOMMUNIT ASMARA

NAVCOMMSTA NEA MAKRI

CNO WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASMARA 0333

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SGEN, SEDU ET

SUBJECT: EXPATRIATE MISSIONARIES AND RELIGIOUS TEACHERS SUMMONED
TO ASMARA

1. EXPATRIATE MISSIONARIES AND RELIGIOUS SCHOOL TEACHERS HAVE BEEN SUMMONED TO ASMARA BY EPMG MILITARY AUTHORITIES. BRITISH, ITALIAN AND SCANDINAVIAN MISSIONARIES HAVE ARRIVED IN ASMARA FROM ADI UGRI, KEREN, DECAMERE AND TESSENNEY, AND HAVE REPORTED TO THE COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE 12TH BRIGADE. THEY HAVE NOT BEEN TOLD THE REASON FOR THEIR BEING SUMMONED, BUT SIMPLY TO AWAIT FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS FROM THESE AUTHORITIES. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE EPMG MILITARY HAVE ASKED THE CIVIL AUTHORITIES FROM THE VARIOUS DISTRICTS OF THE ERITREAN REGION TO INFORM THEM WHEN ALL FOREIGN
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MISSIONARIES AND TEACHERS HAVE LEFT THEIR JURISDICTIONS, SO THAT

BG GETACHEW, MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATOR, CAN BE NOTIFIED.

2. NO LOCAL SOURCES ARE ABLE TO OFFER CONCLUSIVE EXPLANATION FOR THIS ACTION. SPECULATION CENTERS ON THE POSSIBLE EXPULSION OF THE MISSIONARIES OR ON THEIR BEING ASSEMBLED TO BE INFORMED ABOUT THE EPMG'S CONCEPT OF THE ROLE OF MISSIONARIES IN SOCIALIST ETHIOPIA. THIS LATTER THEORY INCLUDES THE SPECULATION THAT SOME FORM OF ETHIOPIAN CONTROL WILL BE IMPOSED ON THEIR OPERATIONS, ESPECIALLY THAT OF THE RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS. UNQUESTIONABLY THIS MOVE IS IN LINE WITH FIRST VICE CHAIRMAN MENGISTU'S SPEECH ALLEGING THAT TEACHERS AND MISSIONARIES ARE BEING USED AS "INSTRUMENTS OF IMPERIALISM". INTERESTINGLY, THE ITALIAN CONSUL REPORTS THAT NO SIMILAR SUMMONS HAS BEEN ISSUED TO

ITALIANBUSINESSMEN AND PRIVATE RESIDENTS IN OUTLYING AREAS OF ERITREA.

3. A MIDDLE EAST GENERAL MISSION MISSIONARY FROM TESSENNEY REPORTED THAT WHEN SHE WAS CALLED BEFORE THE MILITARY COMMANDER IN THAT TOWN, HE EXPRESSED "SHOCK" AT HER BEING TOLD TO LEAVE FOR ASMARA. WHILE HE COULD OFFER NO REASON FOR THIS ACTION, HE SAID HE WOULD EXPECT THAT SHE WOULD BE ALLOWED TO RETURN IN 3 OR 4 WEEKS. WE CONSIDER IT UNLIKELY THAT HE WAS SPEAKING WITH AUTHORITY ON THIS LATTER POINT.

4. THERE IS ONLY ONE AMERICAN MISSIONARY AND ONE RELIGIOUS EDUCATOR IN ERITREA, AND THEY ARE BOTH IN ASMARA. THEY ARE, OF COURSE, CONCERNED AS TO WHAT THESE MOVES MEAN AS THEY HAD INTENDED TO REMAIN HERE AS LONG AS THE SITUATION PERMITS. ANY INFORMATION THAT THE EMBASSY MAY BE ABLE TO PROVIDE ON THE MOTIVES BEHIND THIS SUMMONS WOULD BE HELPFUL.
SHERRY

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